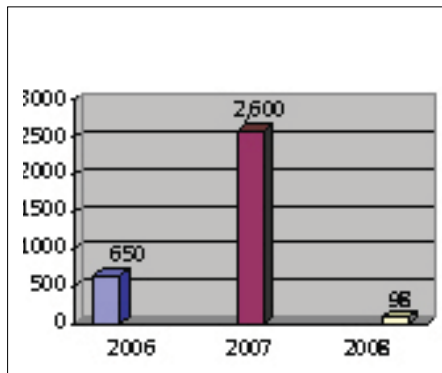


# Commissioner's Office

The Department made strides on a variety of fronts this year, from successfully combating a serious Japanese beetle infestation in Utah County to undertaking an unprecedented effort to rehabilitate livestock grazinglands destroyed by the state's largest wildfire. These and other projects succeeded thanks to the partnerships that were developed with citizens, organizations, and state and federal agencies.

This Fall, Commissioner Blackham was elected Second Vice-President of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA). NASDA is an organization made up of the 50 state departments of agriculture whose mission is to represent and promote the American agriculture industry. As vice-president, the commissioner will eventually host the organization's annual meeting in 2011.

The Japanese beetle eradication efforts made significant progress this year by reducing the insect population by 95 percent. The number of beetles detected this summer numbered 98, compared with more than 2,500 detected the previous year. The beetle is a highly destructive insect that damages lawn turf and flowers, as well as trees and shrubs. An infestation was discovered in Orem in 2006. Since then the UDAF initiated a public education and treatment program that focused on community input and participation. The program is expected to continue until no beetles are detected in consecutive years following treatment.



Working with the Utah Partners for Conservation and Development (UPCD) the Department secured major reinforcements from the Utah Legislature for the war on cheatgrass. Senate Bill 89, authored by Senator Dennis Stowell (R) Parowan, established the Invasive Species Mitigation Fund and set aside \$2 million to fund range projects intended to limit the size of wildfires and improve the quality of Utah's range lands..

A significant portion of Utah's range is being invaded by fast growing annual grasses, such as cheatgrass, that negatively impact livestock grazing and wildlife habitat. A total of 10 projects located in nine counties received funding for the range improvement projects.

The high price of gasoline this past summer prompted Gover-

nor Huntsman to call on the Department's Weights & Measures program to increase its scrutiny of retail gasoline pumps. The program tests pumps for accuracy to protect both the consumer and the retailer. The increased inspections were among several topics discussed during a legislative field day the Department sponsored for a dozen members of the Ag. and Natural Resources Appropriations Committee.



Administrators and managers undertook a nine-month long effort to create a strategic plan to carry the Department into the future. The intent was to assess the condition of agriculture in Utah along with consumer needs and determine whether the UDAF's existing programs were in line to meet those needs. After gathering input from more than 500 stakeholders, the Department crafted a strategic plan that is intended to address the most pressing issues affecting agriculture, the public and the Department. The four priority areas to be addressed are:

1. Improve communication and public awareness of agriculture.
2. Build partnerships and advocacy. Develop leadership.
3. Safeguard our food supply, ensure food safety.
4. Conserve Utah's land and natural resources.

In addition to these four priorities, the Department established the Vision to be the recognized guardian of Utah's food supply and sustainable agriculture. Our Mission is to promote the healthy growth of Utah agriculture, conserve our natural resources and protect our food supply. We Values:

- Integrity and respect
- Service and hard work
- Stewardship and accountability
- Growth and achievement
- People and partnerships
- Heritage and culture



Kathleen Clarke  
Deputy Commissioner

## Deputy Commissioners



Kyle R. Stephens  
Deputy Commissioner

Kathleen Clarke is responsible for overseeing the conservation programs at the Department and is the key contact for interagency partnerships and programs that focus on enhancing the health and productivity of Utah's public and private lands.

Kathleen works to expand watershed and range restoration programs, and to develop improved landscape level management practices and partnerships. She will also work with the Executive Team at UDAF to enhance public awareness and appreciation of the role agriculture plays in our "quality of life" in Utah, both for the production of food and fiber but also in the stewardship of Utah's priceless lands and natural resources.



Kyle Stephens is responsible for and coordinates all of the day to day Department activities and works with each division on their program budgets and goals. Kyle coordinates the Certified Agriculture Mediation Program and the Utah Horse Racing Commission. Is the Treasurer for the Agriculture in the Classroom Program, promulgation of all Department Administrative Rules, collection of predator assessment head tax, is the Department's Hearing Officer and serves on the Utah Dairy Commission and Utah Dairyman's Association as an ex-officio member. Kyle also oversees and coordinates the Department's Balanced Scorecard that is an outcome-based measure of our performance.

### Public Information Office

The office of Public Information is an important link between the public, industry, employees, and other state agencies. The office publishes various brochures, articles, newsletters, web pages as well as creates displays and computer presentations. The office also writes news releases and responds to news media enquires about agriculture and the UDAF. The office has added video-tape capabilities to produce video news releases and video clips that can be viewed at <http://ag.utah.gov/UDAFVideos.html>.

During the past year, the office created public awareness campaigns for many of the department's activities such as: Food safety inspection recalls, Grazing Improvement Program, Healthy Landscapes, Japanese beetle eradication program, Mormon cricket and grasshopper control.

The Public Information Office also interacts with local schools, offering students lessons on the connection between the farm and our food. A complete list of UDAF news releases is available at:

<http://ag.utah.gov/pressrel/agnews.html>.

### Agriculture Mediation Program

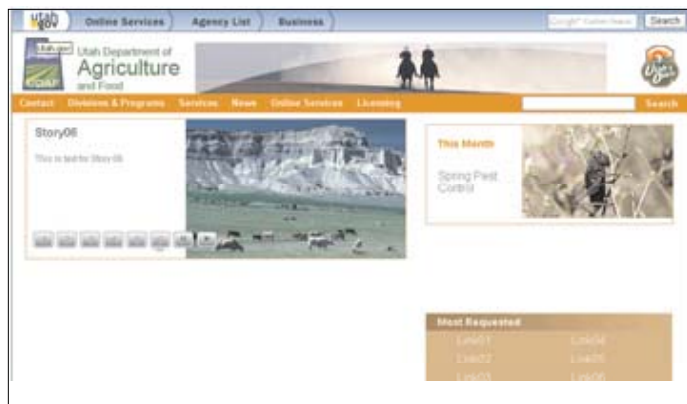
The Department continues to provide services to the agriculture community through its USDA Certified Mediation Program. The program assists farmers and ranchers who face adverse actions in connection with USDA programs. Utah is one of 33 certified programs and has administered this program since 1988.

Utah farmers and ranches who rely on the Certified State Agriculture Mediation Program to help them through difficult economic times have had that valuable service extended after the passage of the Agriculture Mediation Bill. The program helps farmers and ranchers seek confidential advice and counsel to address loan problems and disputes before they grow to be too much for the producer to handle. The legislation will continue to authorize funding of the Certified State Agriculture Mediation Program for five years. Mediation provides a neutral, confidential forum to discuss complex issues and build strong working relationships with producers, lenders and government agencies.

### Agriculture in the Classroom

The mission of Utah is to increase agricultural literacy in Utah by developing a program that improves student awareness about agriculture and instills in students an appreciation for our food and fiber system. This program is necessary because agriculture affects our quality of life and our environment.

The AITC program receives funds from private donors, state funding sources, and grants. These funds are leveraged to meet the programs mission through teacher training, and classroom materials that effectively and efficiently meet the need to increase agricultural literacy.



*The Information office is in the process of converting the agency's web page to a new, more interactive design. The Internet will help the UDAF tell agriculture's story.*